

## 2023 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #44a

I have been staying warm and catching up on non beekeeping things. I am often visited by beekeepers and on occasion some beekeepers get together to renew our friendship and talk about bees.

Every newsletter has a root or beginning with something happening now. I have done almost all that I can think of to prepare my bees for survival to spring. This newsletter is a chance to let me respond to some research being done. I try to stay current on almost any topic concerning winter survival.

One of the the students I mentored several years ago made me aware of research examining the winter bee cluster. I have written about the winter cluster and quite frankly this research paper caused me to wonder if my thinking is on the right path. I think my choice of thin-wall man-made hive is not the problem. Some of us (especially beekeepers in colder regions) can add packing and good wind breaks to help hives survive.

A new beekeeper I know also mentioned to me that he was wanting to buy bee equipment and my advice was -- buy now because prices will likely never be lower and and if he waits too long, he may have difficulty getting what he needs in spring.

However, I am glad I had a chance to prepare him to buy standard equipment (Langstroth hives) because most beekeepers use it and standard frames, extractors and other equipment are designed for the standard frame size. There is always a demand for used standard equipment if for some reason a person wants to sell if they decide to quit.

You might be surprised to find that this one researcher feels the modern thin wall man-made hive has been the reason that bee clusters in winter are harmed. It would be worth your while to search the article just to know that you might be be asked about it. The author recommends that beekeepers urgently change beekeeping practices and get rid of the thin wall modern man-made hive. This article gave me an opportunity to think about thin wall hives, bee clusters and winter survival.